

ECONOMICAL CAUSES

ON

SLAVERY

IN THE UNITED STATES,

AND

OBSTACLES TO ABOLITION.

BY

A SOUTH CAROLINIAN.

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P R E F A C E.

IN the following very imperfect Essay, the Author has endeavoured to make the question of Slavery in the United States the subject of a purely philosophical investigation, so far, at least, as it is possible to apply such a mode of investigation to questions of a nature calculated so strongly to enlist, on the one side or the other, the passions and prejudices of all who undertake their discussion. The word "*imperfect*," as applied by the Author to his Essay, is used not only to imply the consciousness which he feels of how far short it falls of what might have been done, had he possessed the requisite ability, even in urging the few topics connected with the subject to which, so far, he has confined himself; but to imply also that many—very many—topics remain yet untouched, which, if properly considered and discussed, could not fail to add much weight to those views of the question to which the Essay has been limited. The Essay, in fact, is the execution of only a part of a more extensive work upon the question of Slavery, which the Author had planned, but which, for various reasons, it is not at present in his power to carry out to its completion.

SLAVERY IN AMERICA.

THERE are considerations connected with the Kansas question, and the subject of slavery in America generally, which have not attracted, in my opinion, the attention they deserve. It must be recollected that in the earlier periods of American history, during the colonial times, as well as after the declaration of independence, slavery existed in the northern colonies or states as well as the southern. The population of the country was then scattered and scanty, and bore no proportion to the demand for labour which naturally existed in a new country, with a virgin soil of unlimited extent, and whose native products in the market of the world commanded a high price. The occupants of this new country found themselves in possession of spacious and fertile acres, but comparatively limited capital; while the very small number of the population who possessed or owned no land, rendered it almost impossible to obtain hired labour at any rate of wages. Under such circumstances, the offer of African slave labour was made. British capital and vessels were employed in the transportation of black

slaves from Africa to the colonies and plantations, as they were called.

The colonists found that the purchase and expenses of the slave were much more than paid for by the price of the products of his labour.

The price and expenses of the slave were comparatively low, while the price of the products of his labour was comparatively high, and his profits in proportion. Two causes chiefly changed this condition of things. First, the increase of population, whether caused by immigration or propagation; and, secondly, the prohibition of the importation of slaves into the country, contained in a clause of the Federal Council, enacted in the year 1787, and to go into effect in the year 1808. The former of these causes was constantly operating in the lowering the wages of *hired* labour, while the latter produced a rise in the price, or purchase-money of the slave.

The result was, that hired free labour, in the colonies or states where population had most rapidly increased, could be obtained at even a cheaper rate than slave labour; for, while the rate of wages paid for hired labour was constantly falling, the purchase-money it was necessary to pay for the negro slave was constantly rising, in consequence of the obstacles thrown in the way of his importation. The northern and southern states, or colonies, were somewhat differently affected by the operation of these two causes. In the latter, on account of the

great warmth of the climate in the summer and spring months, and the general insalubrity of that season, it has always been found impossible to employ the labour of the white man in agricultural industry, which, particularly in the earlier periods of their history, was the chief and prevailing industry of all the states. The northern and north-eastern states, on the contrary, enjoyed a climate which, at all seasons, admitted of the labour of the white race, but was less favourable to that of the negro. The southern states by their situation and climate required negro labour, and *must* have it, or cease to have any value. White free labour was necessarily exorbitantly dear; first, because the climate was unfavourable to the health of white labourers; and, secondly, because the number of such labourers was very small. The planter could not employ white labour, because, except for the purpose of superintendence, it was absolutely impossible to obtain it; or supposing it *had* been possible to obtain it, it must have been at such a rate of wages as would have swallowed up the entire profit of his production, and led consequently to the abandonment of his fields, and their restoration to the forest. Through the legislative prohibition of the slave trade after the year 1808, negro slave labour became greatly more expensive, from the rise in the price of slaves. But in the northern portion of the union, where the slaves were few, and free hired labour was every year becoming

cheaper, this rise in the price of negro slave labour was but little felt. At the south, on the contrary, where negro slave labour was almost the only labour, and hired white labour was quite out of the question, any considerable rise in the price of the former description of labour was felt as an impediment to the rapid progress and development of the natural resources of the country; and the great demand for the extension of the cultivation of cotton, which arose shortly after the "*prohibitory clause*" was to go into effect, contributed to enhance this rise still further. While the cheapness of cotton, occasioned by the invention of labour-saving machines employed in its preparation for the market, had the effect of extending the demand and consumption of that article, the cessation of the further importation of slaves had, of course, a contrary tendency by enhancing the price and expenses of its production. The extent and fertility of the new lands thrown open to the planter at the same time, by newly-introduced facilities of transport, enabled him to contend against the disadvantage of an enhanced price of labour, and to bring his produce (cotton) to market at a price so moderate as led to a still more extended demand and consumption. The emigrants from the northern and north-eastern states naturally sought a climate and cultivation resembling their own, and found homes generally in the northern and north-western territories—since become flourishing states.

Had the climate of those territories been such as forbade the employment of white agricultural labour, like that of the south-western cotton-growing territories, the new settlers in the former would have been under the same necessity as their brethren farther south, of employing the labour of the slave; and the enhancement in the price of that description of labour, caused by legislative prohibition, would have been felt by them, no less than by the planters of the south and south-west.

But the emigrants to the north and north-western territories found no such necessity; and having come from states where, from the circumstances of climate, situation, and comparative density of population and moderate wages of free labour, either slavery did not exist, or existed only to a very limited extent, they were contented to forego the superior profits they might have derived from a system of compulsory labour.

For it may be remarked, that whatever other advantages they may have proposed to themselves as a counterpoise for the loss of such profits, it cannot be questioned that, in all thinly-peopled countries, the low compulsory wages of slave labour must have an advantage over the necessarily high wages of free labour. In countries so situated in respect to population, the introduction of *cheap* labour in the place of *dear* must contribute to the progress and development of wealth; and it was the introduction of African slave labour, at an early

period, into the colonies and plantations that contributed mainly to their *rapid* advancement in wealth and importance. In countries so situated as they were, almost everything was cheap and abundant *except* labour, and those articles of which the whole value is directly derived from labour. The possessors of thousands of acres of the richest and most fertile land would have been poor but for the introduction of a cheaper description of labour than that which was obtainable by hiring, or the payment of wages. This remark is applicable to all countries, however naturally fertile, which are thinly peopled; but is especially so in regard to those portions of the American territory where the insalubrity and high temperature of the climate rendered the employment of hired white labour impossible. In those portions where such impediments to the employment of white labour did not exist, that labour was gradually supplied by an augmenting free population, derived partly from immigration, though chiefly from natural increase. But, in those fertile and extensive regions of the South and South West, where, during eight or nine months of the year, the employment of white labour was quite out of the question, negro slave labour was indispensable, or that *fertile* country must be abandoned. This, as every one knows, is the country which furnishes the market of the world with cotton, and produces also the finest Indian corn, rice, tobacco, and considerable quantities of

sugar and other valuable products. The production of these important articles of human consumption in the Southern and South Western portions of the American territory cannot be effected otherwise than by the labour of a race capable, by their nature, of enduring and resisting the influences of a climate unfavourable to the health of the European ; and their production at their *present cost and present prices* requires that that labour should be *compulsory*, and not hired ; because, in the present condition of those territories, having a large negro population little disposed to industry, and offering generally great facilities for supporting an idle existence, it would be difficult to obtain the *free* labour of any *considerable* portion of that population at any rate of wages, however high, and quite impossible to do so at a rate which would leave any profit to the planter at the prices which his products now bring in the market. Looking, therefore, at the question in a merely economical point of view, it seems quite certain, that were that negro population at once emancipated, the first result would be a deficiency of labour for the production of those important articles of human consumption which, heretofore, have been produced by the compulsory labour of the negro slave. This result would be caused by the refusal of a large portion of that population, now free, to give their labour to the planter in return for the housing, clothing, and support which constituted the wages of the slave. The offer of

higher wages—of better housing, clothing, and support, would doubtless attract an additional supply of labour, and improve the condition of the labourer; but it would make it necessary, at the same time, for the planter to raise the price of his products. Rice, sugar, cotton, could not be purchased in the market at the comparatively low prices at which they may now be had; and the compelled enhancement of their price must have the effect of lessening consumption and contracting the market of these articles. The amount of them produced must therefore be diminished; and the least rich, fertile, and accessible of the lands now cultivated with a view to their production must be abandoned. Not only would a check be given to the population and progress of these countries, but their population would be positively diminished, and their rapidly increasing wealth, prosperity, and civilization be made to retrograde.

That portion of the negro population who could be induced by high wages to labour, might possibly be improved in condition, and be better off than in a state of servitude; but the idle, the dissolute, and the improvident would constitute a very large proportion of the entire population; and though, in a land where the mere means of subsistence are so cheap and abundant, they might continue to *exist*, they would contribute nothing either to the wealth or population of the country. It is to be feared, too, that this portion of the negro population, emanci-

pated from the domestic discipline of the plantation, and permitted to roam about at will, would constitute, in a country so situated as the southern states, a dangerous element of disorder ; while the necessity which would arise for guarding against this evil might warrant the adoption of means of restraint and punishment far more severe than those employed by the master, and not tempered by those considerations of interest and prudence which would generally influence him in the punishment of his slaves, or those regards of sympathy which naturally spring up between persons, however differently situated, who have had long and intimate intercourse and relations with one another. But confining ourselves for the present to those considerations, in relation to slavery, which present it as a question of economy and progress, we may remark that the effect of introducing cheap compulsory labour into a new unpeopled or thinly-peopled country, is to anticipate both the advantages and the evils of civilization, by creating at once a wealthy class of proprietors who form the aristocracy of the country, and a labouring class who seem born for little else save the ministering to the wants and gratifications of their superiors. In the ordinary course of things, civilization is to be found only in densely-peopled communities, where, through the effect of competition, the poorer classes are compelled to offer their services and labour for so low a rate of compensation as barely serves for subsistence and for keeping up the population ;

while the more fortunate members of the community, secured in the possession of wealth, and enjoying an almost unlimited command over the cheap services and labour of the working man, are enabled to indulge in all the luxuries which ingenuity or fancy can invent or suggest. Without cheap labour, such a state of things cannot exist; and where every man is free, and fertile land is abundant and may be had for the settling and clearing, it is impossible that labour should be cheap, *except it be of the compulsory kind*: hence, in new territories, like those of the valley of the Mississippi and its tributaries, the necessity for the employment of negro slave-labour. Hence, had it not been for the operation of causes which we shall point out, slavery would have existed as well in Ohio and the other north-western states similarly situated as in the states of Kentucky, Tennessee, and other south-western states; though (for reasons already mentioned) it is not at all probable that it would have existed to the exclusion of free hired labour.

One of the principal causes alluded to was the great distance of Ohio and the territories similarly situated from the chief marts of slaves in the South (where, from the nature of the climate, productions, and peculiar agricultural capabilities, they were most wanted), and the consequent expense of obtaining slave labour in those remote territories. Another cause may be found in the circumstances of those territories having been peopled by emigra²

tions from the north-eastern or New England states, where, from the nature of the soil and climate, agricultural labour, for which alone the imported negro was fitted, was in much less demand than in the southern states.

The industry of those states was applied chiefly to trade, whether foreign or domestic; to ship-building; to the production of those rude articles of manufacture which required more ingenuity than labour. An industry of this nature could be very little aided by the labour of negro savages just imported from Africa. Although, therefore, the New England merchants and traders, in the prosecution of their business, imported into the country large numbers of those unfortunate beings, they found their chief market for the sale of them in the southern and agricultural states, where the culture of rice, cotton, and a variety of other products, under an almost tropical sun, demanded the labour of a race capable of enduring great heat without suffering, and rendered that labour of inestimable value. Comparatively few, therefore, of the imported slaves were found in the north-eastern colonies or states, from whence (as we have remarked) Ohio and other north-western states were peopled. The inhabitants of the New England colonies or states who owned slaves, were few in number, and *they* were not those who were most likely to emigrate; to which we may add, that at the period during which the earlier settlements of

the north-western territories took place, those facilities for transportation and locomotion did not exist which at the present day have become so familiar; and that, at that period, the transportation to the far interior of the western wilds of slaves must have been effected at great expense. The same difficulty and expense of transportation must have weighed heavily upon the profits of agriculture in those distant territories, and have retarded and circumscribed very much the only description of industry in which the labour of the slave could have been useful and profitable; viz., that of agriculture. These were among the chief causes which prevented the introduction and adoption of slavery in Ohio and the north-western states similarly situated. And the rapid growth of population in those states, arising both from immigration and natural increase, was such as in a few years to afford a supply of free hired labour, at rates of wages which would have rendered the possession of slaves more burthensome than useful, and which were doubly operative in producing this effect, in consequence of a law prohibiting the importation of slaves, which went into effect in the year 1808, and which, by raising the price of slaves and slave labour, deprived the latter of the sole advantage which in the northern and healthy climates it possessed, or was supposed to possess, over free hired labour.

The southern and south-western states and territories were differently situated. *There* the chief

employment of labour was in agriculture. *There* the soil was eminently fertile and well watered—adapted to the production of some of the most important articles of human consumption, and which, not being easily procurable elsewhere, and of equally good quality, bore high prices, or highly remunerative prices in the market of the world. This soil too, thus fertile and productive, enjoyed the advantage of not being too remote from the markets where its products were to be consumed. It possessed, on the contrary, this advantage in a remarkable degree. Thus to these countries, uniting so many advantages of soil, climate, rareness of native production, and accessibleness to intercourse with the markets of the world, nothing was wanting but *cheap labour* to make them rich, thriving, and prosperous. *With* the command of such labour, they could not fail to be what they are, powerful and prosperous; with a constantly increasing population, and constantly increasing wealth; with an area constantly extending, and improving from swamp and forest into cultivated and productive fields. The slave-holding states, now so called, are fifteen in number (we quote from the census of 1850), and contain an area of *improved* farm land of upwards of fifty-four millions of acres, and *unimproved* land of a considerably greater extent (*about seventy millions*), the cash value of the farms amounting to several thousands of millions of dollars. It may enable us to form some idea of the rapid

progress of improvement and cultivation in the southern and south-western portions of the union to state (upon the authority of the census above-mentioned), that "the amount" (of cotton) exported from the United States in 1791, was 189,316 pounds; in 1793, 487,600 pounds; in 1794, 1,601,760 pounds; in 1795, 6,276,300 pounds; in 1800, 17,789,803 pounds; in 1810, 93,261,462 pounds; and in the year 1850-51, it had attained to the enormous amount of 927,237,089 pounds. It is remarked a little farther on, that "immense as the extent and value of this crop has become, it is not extravagant to anticipate a rate of increase for the current decennial period, which will bring up the aggregate for the year 1860, to 4,000,000 bales," which, calculating the bale at 400 pounds, would give an aggregate of 1,600,000,000 pounds!

The same authority states, that "In the year 1815, it was estimated that the sugar made on the banks of the Mississippi alone amounted to ten million pounds."

In 1818 the entire crop of Louisiana was only twenty-five million pounds; in 1850 it had reached the enormous quantity of 226,001,000 pounds, besides about twelve million gallons of molasses! I mention these well-authenticated facts as illustrative of the unparalleled rapidity with which, during the last half-century, the agricultural industry of the southern and south-western states has extended itself.

I have stated above that the slave-holding states, or, as some affect to call them, the *slave states*, are now fifteen in number, and contain an area of *improved land* of upwards of 54,000,000 acres, and of unimproved land of considerably greater extent, something under 70,000,000 acres, not including the *unimproved* land of California, amounting to 3,831,571 acres.

In the year 1850, to which these calculations refer, the entire number of improved acres in farms in all the states of the Union amounted to 118,457,622, so that the cultivated acres of the slave-holding states exceeded in number those of the remaining states of the Union, by about 22,000,000, speaking in round numbers.

At the period of the Revolution, there were only five slave-holding states, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Georgia, which, in the year 1850, contained in round numbers 29,000,000 of improved acres in farms. At the former period, the number of improved acres in these five states, must have been only a very small fraction of 29,000,000; as may easily be inferred from the *data* given above, in relation to the wonderfully rapid progress of cultivation in those states within the last half-century. In the year 1790 the slave population, which was chiefly in the five southern states above named, amounted to under 700,000; now, their numbers, within those states, amount to about 2,800,000, so that, on a moderate calculation,

we may reckon the cultivation in those states as four times more extensive in 1850 than it was in the year 1790. If, therefore, in the year 1850, the number of cultivated acres was 29,000,000; in the year 1790 it must have been probably about 7,250,000. For 7,250,000 acres cultivated in 1790, within the five states named, there are, now, cultivated 29,000,000; showing an extension of cultivation *within* those states of 21,750,000 acres. Now, if we add to this 21,750,000 acres, the improved or *cultivated* acres of *the slave-holding states which have come into existence since the period of the Revolution*, viz. 27,780,127, we have an aggregate of 49,530,000 acres, which have been brought into cultivation and improved within something more than half a century. This immense area of improved land, as well as that portion of the land of the five *old* slave-holding states which was improved and cultivated before the year 1790, making in all an aggregate of upwards of 54,000,000 acres, is cultivated by the hands of *a slave population numbering between three and four millions*.

The chief productions consist of cotton, tobacco, sugar, rice, Indian corn, wheat, rye, oats, potatoes (both sweet and Irish), peas, and beans, to which must be added, as indirect productions of the land, wool, and various descriptions of live stock, horses, asses, and mules, milch cows, working oxen, other cattle, sheep, swine. Of these productions of Southern industry the live stock alone, in

the year 1850, had risen to the value of nearly 300,000,000 dollars, *considerably exceeding the value of the live stock of the non-slave-holding states at the same period.*

In the same year (1850) there was grown in the slave-holding states alone the enormous amount of 345,979,608 bushels of Indian corn; the non-slave-holding states producing that year 246,347,009 bushels, or about 100,000,000 less. The cultivation of cotton is confined exclusively to the slave-holding states; for the production of *fourteen bales* in the state of Indiana in the year 1850 can hardly be regarded as forming an exception to the rule. That year (1850) the slave-holding states of the south and south-west produced 987,449,600 pounds, or 2,468,624 bales of 400 pounds each, as we have before stated; the market value of which, at the moderate price of ten cents the pound, would be just 98,744,960 dollars, or about £24,000,000 sterling. If we estimate the Indian corn produced *in the slave-holding states* in the year 1850, at only fifty cents the bushel, we shall have an aggregate price of 172,989,801½ dollars, and if we add to this 98,744,960 dollars, the estimated value of the cotton crop of the same year, we have 271,734,761½ dollars.

This is a very moderate, if not a low estimate, of the market value of *only two* crops annually produced by the *slave industry* of the slave-holding states of the south and south-west. Rice, tobacco, oats, wheat, &c., are produced also, as we have

already remarked, and in large quantities; the rice crop of South Carolina alone, in the year 1850, having been within a very small fraction of 160,000,000 pounds, which, at the low price of three cents the pound, give an aggregate price of 4,800,000 dollars. But it can be hardly necessary to go into any further details, in order to prove the great and increasing importance of southern industry. Were that industry in any material degree obstructed, or destroyed, the consequences would be serious, not only to the existence of the slave-holding states of the south and south-west, but would essentially affect and derange all the great commercial, manufacturing, and generally industrial interests of the non-slave-holding communities of the northern and north-eastern states; nor would the consequences of such an event be confined to the Union. They would extend to England, France, and all other countries with whom we have extensive commercial relations; but, in the two countries named, and especially in the former, they would be only less injurious in deranging commercial and manufacturing industry than within the Union itself. I have already explained, that the true cause of all the industry, cultivation, and progress of the southern and slave-holding states is found in *the cheapness of the only labour which can be effectually employed, namely, negro slave labour*. I have explained why, in order to the success and maintenance of this industry, it

is not only necessary that the negro should be employed, *but that his labour should be compulsory*, and his wages (so to call his support, housing, clothing, &c.) should be under the control of his employer. I have stated, that although, supposing the negro emancipated, his labour might be obtained, it must be so at a rate of wages far exceeding that of those now virtually paid to him in the shape of housing, clothing, support, &c., by his master; that, consequently, all the products of his labour, cotton, rice, tobacco, sugar, Indian corn, &c., must rise very greatly in their market price, while they would diminish in an equal degree as regards the amount and quantities of them which would be cultivated and brought to market; and a very extended area of the land now cleared, tilled, and improved for the purpose of their production would be given up to waste and forest. I have remarked, too, that supposing order and good government to continue, the condition of the industrious portion of the negro population might *possibly* be somewhat ameliorated; but that owing to the nature of the climate, the ease with which, in the countries in question, a mere sufficiency of subsistence may be obtained, and the indolent and unenergetic nature of the negro race, it may be confidently concluded that the proportion of that population disposed to be industrious would be small. The proportion, on the other hand, of the idle and lazy would undoubtedly be large. The

nature of the climate and the nature of the negro would dispose him to indolence ; and the ease with which a mere subsistence may be obtained in the countries in question, would take away the great incentive to labour among the poor—the necessity of it for the support of life. This remark, applicable in a greater or less degree to all races of men, is more especially true of the negro. He does not appear to be endowed by nature, or not, at least, in the same degree as the white man, with those refining and elevating instincts which are the origin and foundation of all civilization. His condition, wherever found, anterior to any communication or intercourse with the civilization of Europe or Asia, has been that of either absolute barbarism, or of a civilization so rude, as to make the use of the term “civilization,” as applied to it, even ridiculous. A mud hut of the rudest construction, a pigsty, a small quantity of parched Indian corn, and a few beads, sufficed for that sort of happiness of which alone he seemed capable. It seems to be in the order of nature that those races of the human family who have the highest intellectual and moral organization should have also the most numerous and most various wants, or that those races should have the most numerous and various wants who have been endowed by nature with the superior faculties and ingenuity which are necessary for obtaining their gratification. The civilization of any race where indigenous, and not derived from

any foreign origin, must always savour of the race among whom it has its growth; and when not influenced or modified by foreign causes, its quality and stamp, even where it has reached its highest point, will still depend upon the moral and intellectual faculties and instincts, and in some degree, perhaps, upon the physical attributes, of the race among whom it is found. Laws, manners, religion, letters, arts, sciences, and manufactures, form an important part of that condition of society which we call civilization, and upon the degree of purity, elevation, or excellence, to which these shall have attained in any community depends the measure of its civilization, and the rank which it will be entitled to take among the civilized nations of the world. Among the negro races of Africa, from among whom the slaves have been purchased by traders, and imported into America, no such manifestations of civilization have ever been found. Laws, manners, religion, letters, arts, sciences, or manufactures, *have no existence among them*. The first missionaries who were sent out to those parts of Africa, inhabited by the races in question, were appalled at the moral waste and spiritual destitution exhibited in the degraded condition of this portion of the African population.

They found a people, or rather a population, without any religion beyond the grossest idolatry, and without any laws except the will of a master, whose only conception of morals and duty consisted

in a blind obedience to established authority, and whose chief happiness appeared to consist in utter idleness, or in some trifling or childish amusement. Their total ignorance, at the same time, of letters, and of all the sciences and arts which adorn and dignify, and of all the manufactures which contribute to the comfort, convenience, or luxury of life, completes the picture, and leaves upon our minds the conviction that the absence among the races in question of even that moderate share of civilization which is found among all other races, under circumstances not at all more favourable than those in which the African is placed, is to be ascribed to causes inherent in the negro himself, and not to the accident of situation and climate. The great heat of the climates inhabited by the negro races will account, undoubtedly, for the absence of some of those accommodations and conveniences which are common among the civilized communities of Europe and Asia. It will account for the absence of fire-places and chimneys for any other purpose than that of preparing food—for the absence of that style of building which, in the northern climates of Europe and America, is a protection against the rigours and severity of winter. It will account for the disuse, among the races in question, of any covering for the body except what decency requires; but it cannot account for the absence of a thousand elegant and ingenious contrivances found in the warmer climates of southern

Europe and America, and applied to purposes of utility and comfort, and which would be equally applicable to similar purposes in the still warmer climates of Africa: nor can it account for the absence of painting, sculpture, poetry, history, philosophy, natural and moral science, and all those multiplied results of human genius and intellect which mark the history and progress of races of superior cerebral organization. It appears to be no less true than it is remarkable, that the growth and development of these manifestations and conditions of civilization are found, as a general rule admitting of few exceptions, to correspond much more nearly to the superiority of organization than to the advantages of situation and circumstance. History affords no record of any of the white races of Europe, or even the tawny races of Asia, having been ever discovered in a condition of society (if it may be so called) so little advanced in the arts of civilization as that in which those negro races are found from among whom the supply of slaves has been drawn. The former races, under whatever form of rule or polity, and however rude or primitive in manners, have exhibited a range of conception, a vigour of action, and a tone of moral elevation, to which nothing analogous is to be found among the negro races of Africa. To the eyes of Europeans, and *especially those of Englishmen*, the tawny races of Asia, the Hindoo, the Malay, the Chinese, and the Japanese, offer no very exalted

type of intellectual or moral excellence; yet all these races, *notwithstanding*, are undeniably *civilized*, and have been so from time immemorial: they have their industry, their arts, both elegant and useful; they have their painting, poetry, sculpture, architecture; they have built great cities, founded extensive empires, and established comprehensive systems of law and order. Nothing of this has ever been found among the negro races of Africa, nor anything even resembling it, except in so remote a degree, that in making a comparison between the two, we are struck rather with the *dissimilitude* than with the resemblance, and are surprised at the discovery of a likeness where the objects of comparison have, apparently, so little relation. This manifest inferiority of the negro in the state in which he has ever been found in his native climates,—adapted to the healthful development of *his* physical *nature*, and therefore not unfavourable to that of his perceptive and intellectual faculties and moral *sentiments and instincts*—cannot with fairness be ascribed to deficiencies of education or want of opportunity. The condition and state of civilization in which nations and races were discovered, long anterior to the period when the influence of commerce began to be felt, must necessarily have depended far more upon themselves and their own nature and faculties, than upon the operation and prevalence of foreign causes. The tone and colour of their civilization must have been derived from

the character of their minds and faculties; whilst its degree of advancement, whether greater or less, would depend upon time and circumstances. It is not supposed that Homer's age was one of a very advanced civilization, yet it has given us a poem, a work of art and genius which has been the model and pattern of all succeeding generations.

The same thing may be said of all the works of art and genius of *the Greeks*, and of all the perfect or imperfect remains of these, which have come down to our time, whether in painting, sculpture, architecture, or in poetry, eloquence, history, or philosophy—the former the outward and visible, the latter the moral and intellectual evidences of the civilization of a highly-gifted and superior race.

The philosophers of the school which teaches the equality of the races of mankind will hardly contend that the negro race, had they been placed in Greece, or in similar circumstances with the Greeks, would equally have produced a Homer, a Sophocles, a Praxiteles, or a Phidias in the imaginative and plastic arts; or an Aristotle, a Plato, or a Thucydides, in philosophy and history. It may be doubted, perhaps, whether it would not be going too far to predicate this, even of those races which, in the present day, take the lead in civilization. But while, for the reasons which we have given above, and for others not yet brought forward, we are compelled to believe the negro races, generally, inferior to the white races of Europe, and even the copper-

coloured races of some parts of Asia, in all the instincts and faculties, intellectual and moral, in which civilization has its origin; yet we would by no means intend it to be inferred that we look upon all white races as standing upon a perfect equality *with one another*, as regards the possession of these intellectual and moral qualities; or that, in this respect, we consider all copper-coloured races as on an equal footing. Providence, for wise ends, no doubt, has created different races of men, as it has different species and genera of other animals, many of which, though very nearly resembling one another in a general view, have yet always some distinctive peculiarity which marks the type of the race, and guides the classification of the naturalist. The progress of science has proved that, when pure and unmixed, the races of men, like those of the lower animals, are susceptible of an accurate classification.

But it is not our purpose to enter into the question of *races*, any farther than the aim and object of our inquiry make necessary.

These require that we should place in a clear and strong light the positive and striking points of difference which distinguish the race of the negro from that of the white man.

These points of difference, which, to those who have had the best opportunities of studying the character and qualities of the negro, are most obvious, *constitute, in reality, the great difficulty of*

what has been called the "problem of slavery." If it could be made as manifest to the mind of the slave-owners of the "southern states," who have constant and daily opportunities of seeing and judging of the negro, as it is to that of English gentlemen or journalists who have never seen one of this race, that the slave, at least naturally, is quite equal to his master—that the black man is in every respect the equal of the white, and that no natural difference between them exists which should prevent an "amalgamation" of the two races;—if this could be done, the greatest difficulty connected with the question of slavery of the "southern states" would at once be at an end. It is the deeply-settled and immovable conviction in the mind of the white man of the South, of the absolute, essential, and radical inferiority of the black, which will ever exclude the latter from the enjoyment of equal political rights and social position with the former. This conviction in the mind of the white man, were it limited solely to a mental or moral inferiority, would be insufficient to account for the strong and insurmountable repugnance which he feels to the intimacy of social relationship with the black. Nature in this instance, as in others, has manifested in the outward forms and properties which address themselves to the senses, something of those latent differences of mind or soul which we assume to exist. Whatever may be thought by some who, like the late Bishop Heber, may be of opinion that the

darker shades of complexion are more agreeable to the eye, and more conformable to the principles of taste than those lighter hues which distinguish the European and most of the Asiatic races, it is quite certain that, as a general rule, the complexion of the negro is neither pleasing nor attractive, or not so, at least, in the eyes of those of an opposite complexion.

It is quite certain, as a general rule, that the white man of European origin looks upon the negro with feelings very much the reverse of those of affectionate admiration. It is not for me to express any opinion whether, on such a question of mere taste, he is right or wrong.

The fact that the white man *does* so regard the negro is undoubted and indisputable. It can scarcely be necessary to enter into the inquiry of why this is so, or why the thick lips, the broad nose, the coarse black skin, and the woolly hair of the negro, should not be as agreeable to the eye of the white man and *of taste* as the more regular features and delicate skin and complexion of the European races?

Such a discussion might be amusing or instructive ; but it could answer no practical purpose, unless it could be the means of convincing the white races that in preferring their own features and complexion they are guilty of a gross error of taste and a violation of the principles of beauty. It is important, however, to remark that the preference of the white

race for those of their own complexion, and their general and decided aversion from any very intimate social relations with the negro, are not of a nature to be eradicated or changed. As they do not owe their origin to circumstance or situation or accident, so no causes of this nature can have any sensible effect in either modifying or changing them. It is an error to suppose, as some do, that the state of servitude and degradation in which the negro has long been held is the sole or chief cause of the feeling, somewhat akin to *contempt*, generally entertained for him by the white.

That this feeling of contempt for the poor negro on the part of the white man may be increased and aggravated through the operation of the cause referred to, we have no disposition to deny; nor can it be disputed that the same cause strengthens, not a little, the feeling of intolerance with which the white man in America is disposed to view the suggestion of any system of polity, based upon the assumption of a perfect equality between the races, of political and social rights. It can scarcely be necessary, however, to adduce any arguments to show that the servitude and degradation alluded to, although an aggravating cause of the feeling entertained by the white man towards the black, is by no means the chief and prevailing one. *This* is to be found, unquestionably, in the strong contrasts and discrepancies which separate the races, and which to the perceptions of the ruling race convey an intuitive

and unhesitating conviction of great and conscious superiority. The chief cause, therefore, of this feeling and conviction on the part of the white man, is of a nature permanent and enduring. It must endure so long as the nature and qualities which characterize and distinguish the two races shall continue unchanged; and so long as this nature and these qualities continue unchanged, so long will that feeling and conviction on the part of the white man continue, which repels anything like an approach between these races to an intimacy of social, or an equality of political, relations.

Convinced of the soundness of this view of the causes which, in the United States, have for upwards of 100 years past kept the two races asunder, and have prevented between them the establishment of other relations than those which have long existed and still exist, we find it difficult to escape the conclusion that, in the political and social system of the country, the negro must always occupy the same subordinate position which he has ever done. It does not, indeed, necessarily follow, from an admission of his *inferiority*, that he must ever be in a state of personal servitude, or be the *property* of the superior race; but it *does* follow, we think, that wherever in any of the states the negroes numerically bear any very considerable proportion to the population of the whites, and especially where they approach in numbers to anything like an equality with the latter, they must

ever stand towards these in one of two relations—that of either personal, or political servitude. In many of the northern and north-eastern states of the Union, where the proportion of the black population has always been insignificant, the abolition of slavery and the placing the negro upon an equal footing, politically, with the white, was effected without difficulty or expense, and without danger or even inconvenience. The influx of a working class from Europe, and the natural increase of population in those climates, had reduced the rate of *free* wages; while, at the same time, the employment of slave labour had become more expensive in consequence of the prohibition put upon the importation of slaves under a clause of the federal constitution.

It required, therefore, no great effort of self-denial on the part of those states to make a sacrifice of their systems of slavery; nor in extending to their negro population the right of suffrage and other political franchises, could they possibly have had any fears that in doing so they were lessening, in any sensible degree, the political influence and weight of the white portion of their population; and still less that they were raising up within their borders a rival power which might become one day formidable to the dominion of the ruling race. The situation of the southern and slave-holding states is different, or rather the very opposite of this. The population of some of them is composed equally, or

nearly equally, of whites and blacks; and in all of them the proportion of the latter population to the former is very large, even in those cases where it does not amount to an equality. These states could not, therefore, like the northern and north-eastern states, emancipate the slave, or place him upon a footing with the white, and extend to him the right of suffrage and all other political rights which belong to the free white citizen, without the most serious fears, not only of lessening, in a very sensible degree, the political influence and weight of the white portion of the population, but *much worse*—of raising up, within their own borders, a rival power which, at a future and not very distant day, might show itself a determined and formidable antagonist to the dominion, and even the existence, of the ruling race.

In framing their polity and laws, therefore, in relation to the negro portion of their population, the only alternative left to them was the retention on the one hand, of the existing system of personal servitude, or some modification of it: or, on the other, the adoption of some system which, while it conceded personal liberty to the negro, and freed him from the rule of an owner and proprietor, yet so restricted his political rights (if it did not entirely withhold them) that his condition must become one of unqualified and hopeless *political* servitude. The same political necessity which, *at an earlier period*, compelled a choice of one or the other of these two

systems, still exists; and has acquired additional force and cogency from causes connected with the present condition and population of the southern and slave-holding states. During the (more than) three-quarters of a century which have elapsed since the declaration of independence, the negro population has increased from less than half a million to more than three millions and a half; or is, in other words, about sevenfold greater than it was at that early period: and as this increase of negro population has been much more rapid in the southern and slave-holding states, than in the non-slave-holding states of the north, the numbers of this description of population in the states first mentioned must bear even a larger proportion than this to those of the earlier period. The dangers and difficulties necessarily attendant upon any attempt to change the existing system, have only increased with the lapse of time and the increase of the negro population. Had the southern states decided upon the abolition of slavery at about the same period at which the northern states resolved upon the adoption of that measure, the result would have been disastrous, certainly, to their progress and prosperity; but the change, in other respects, could have been effected with far less evil and danger than would attend it at the present day. On the supposition that this measure had been adopted at that early day, the effect would have been to arrest in its earliest stage the progress and development

of that immense and multifarious industry which, commencing in the fields of the slave-holding states of the south, and extending itself in its ramifications over the commercial and manufacturing states of the north, has so linked itself with the commerce, the manufactures, the habits, the comforts, the wants, and the pleasures of the fairest portions of Europe, that it could not now be destroyed, or even very seriously relaxed or diminished, without revolutionizing the domestic economy, and deranging the commercial relations, of half the countries of the world.

This great industry which, at the present moment, forms so striking a feature in the condition and prospects of the world, could not, on the supposition made, have ever come into existence. The negro population, at the period referred to, did not exceed, throughout the country, a few hundred thousand. It consisted of savages lately imported from their native shores—ignorant, improvident, brutal, and unacquainted with the language of their masters—unaccustomed to any description of work in their own country, and only reluctantly working under the compulsion of fear and punishment. The cultivation of the southern states, at that time, was confined chiefly to the production of tobacco, indigo, rice, and a few other articles intended for domestic consumption; or if cotton was produced at all, it was only in small and inconsiderable quantities; because, as yet, those most ingenious inventions had

not been given to the world, which, by lessening very much the expense and labour of preparing the cotton-wool for use, secured for it the extended and world-wide market which it now commands. Those extended fields in the interior of the country, now cultivated in cotton, and which send forth yearly the material for clothing half the world, were quite unknown and unexplored; and, had the emancipation of the negro taken place at that time, they would have continued so; and their immense value, as well as that of the slave labour by which they have been since cultivated, would have been equally unknown. Under such circumstances, the emancipation of the negro might have taken place in the southern states, without, in an economical point of view, producing such disastrous results as must necessarily attend it at the present time. The evil consequences, in this respect, which would have followed it, would have been chiefly of a prospective nature. It would not so much have swept away wealth, prosperity and civilization already existing, as it would have prevented their existence.

But the effects and consequences of the early emancipation of the negro in the southern states would not have stopped here. The same cause which would have arrested the progress of wealth and prosperity, would have prevented, or retarded, at the same time, the increase of the negro population. It might, perhaps, be going too far to assert, that this portion of the population of the

southern states would not, on the supposition of early emancipation, have increased at all, would have been stationary, or would have diminished in numbers. There seems, however, to be every reason for believing that it would not, on that supposition, have increased much, even though we should leave out of view some circumstances connected with the situation of the negro population of the south, which do not attend that of the similar population of the northern states—circumstances to which we shall have occasion to advert more particularly farther on. It appears from the Report of the Census of the year 1850, that the number of slaves in that year was 3,204,089, showing an increase since 1840 of 716,733, equal to 28·81 per cent. “The number of free coloured in 1850,” according to the same authority, “was 428,661; in 1840, 386,292. The increase of this class has been 42,369, or 10·26 per cent. From 1830 to 1840 the increase of the whole population (whites and blacks) was at the rate of 32·67 per cent.”

The slaves therefore have increased at very nearly the same ratio as the entire population of the country; while the free coloured population has increased at a rate of per-centage which is, to that of the general increase, as 1·096 to 3·267.

According to this, it appears that 100 free coloured people should, in ten years, increase to 110·96; while the same number of the population generally would increase to 132·67; and an equal

number of slaves to 128·81. We may remark, incidentally, that so rapid an increase of slave population is scarcely consistent with the belief that they are, as a general rule, treated with cruelty, or are over-worked ; but, to return to the question of the causes which, on the supposition of an emancipation of the negroes in the southern states at the early period referred to, would have been favourable or otherwise to their increase, we may remark that in these states there were, as there still are, circumstances connected with the situation of the black population which do not and never did exist in the states to the north, now called non-slave-holding states. One of the most important of these circumstances was that of the nearly equal balance between the white and negro population, which, since a very early period, existed in the slave-holding states of the south. It has already been explained why, in these states, the slave negro population has always borne a larger proportion to the whites than in the states farther north. In these last-mentioned states, for the reasons formerly given, the number of negroes was always insignificant. When, therefore, it was thought that the time had arrived for emancipating this part of the population, no jealous fears existed, on the part of the whites, that such a measure might be attended with danger, or even with any very serious inconvenience.

The negro population in these states, whether slave or free, were looked upon by the whites with

great indifference. It was not ever supposed that any legislative measures which might be adopted in relation to this despised portion of the population, could ever seriously affect the welfare of the community at large.

In some, therefore, if not all of these states, not only civil, but political rights were extended to the negro, and he became a citizen with all the attributes and capacities belonging to that character. This sufficiently proves that in those states no apprehensions were entertained by the whites that the emancipation of the black portion of their population could lead to any evil or inconvenience.

Very different, upon this subject, has always been the feeling in the states of the south.

Here the negro population, as we have remarked above, was equal, or nearly equal in numbers to the whites. They constituted in their condition of servitude (as they still constitute) a very large part of the entire wealth of the southern country; but, freed from that condition, and from the *surveillance* and discipline of the plantation, they might become a formidable foe, secret or open; or in political contests and elections, supposing them admitted to the rights of citizenship, a dangerous element of civil discord; or, at the least, a mischievous tool in the hands of ambitious and designing demagogues. Keeping in view, however, the superiority of the white race, and the strong consciousness of that superiority which they have always had, it was not

possible that they should ever consent to admit the blacks to any participation of rights with themselves, *which might endanger or threaten their own absolute ascendancy and dominion.* But, in the southern and slave-holding states, the admission of the blacks to a participation with the whites in the exercise of political rights, must inevitably have led to a condition of things very adverse to the continued supremacy of the latter. In these states, therefore, the black has ever been, as he ever will be, excluded from the exercise of political rights. It follows that, even though he should be freed from the condition of domestic servitude, he *would continue still under the dominion and rule of the white.* Supposing, then, the negro emancipated in the slave-holding states, but *not* admitted, as in the northern states, to the rights and franchises of citizenship, we should have two races nearly equal in number and physical force, living within the same territory—within, as it were, the sight of one another's fires; cultivating neighbouring fields; occupying, in the towns and villages, neighbouring habitations; pursuing their several occupations or industry, whether in the country or in town, within the reach of neighbourhood; yet without any of the feeling or attachment which should belong to that relation: the one race conscious of its superiority, and strengthened in this feeling by the exclusive possession of political power; the other cowering under the domination of their haughty rulers,

secretly hating them, jealous of their power, and resenting their own exclusion from it, but biding their time, and anxiously awaiting a day of retribution. Such must be, under the most favourable view, the condition which the southern states would present, on the supposition of the emancipation of the blacks from servitude, *unaccompanied* by their admission to the rights and exercise of political power. It is obvious that the blacks would *still be slaves*, though not so, exactly, in the sense in which they are so now. They would still have *masters*, though not *proprietors and owners*. Instead of one master, they would have a thousand. Instead of having, as at present, in their owners a master, engaged by various and powerful motives of both sympathy and interest to care for and protect them in their health, welfare, and preservation, they would have in the whites, now *no longer their owners*, a thousand tyrants; not only feeling no sympathy for them, and taking no interest in them, but entertaining for them, on the contrary, a positive dislike and antipathy, not to say hatred. So long as the black continued under the authority and protection of his owner and master, he continued also under his *supervision* and control.

Each master or owner of slaves was a sort of *magistrate*—the guardian and trustee not only of his own interest and safety, but of those, also, of the public. Each master knew the characters of his slaves, and was more interested than any stranger

could be in knowing or discovering whatever might be passing on the plantation which might endanger his own interest or safety, or those of his neighbours or the public. He was, therefore, singularly well placed for keeping watch and ward over any movement among those subjected to his own control, which might seem to threaten or compromise his own or the public safety. The compelled industry and discipline of a plantation, too, left few opportunities for plotting or intrigues among the slaves; and, at the same time, the knowledge on the part of the planters and community of the existence and prevalence of this system of discipline and rule throughout the country, inspired a general feeling of confidence, and thus excluded those numerous and dreadful evils to both races which would inevitably result from mutual jealousies and fears.

Slavery, therefore, as it exists in the southern states, is not only the means of creating and bringing into activity a vast amount of industry which would otherwise have no existence; it is at the same time a *system of police and government*. That for securing some of the most important ends of government, it is admirably adapted, can hardly, at this day, be doubted; we mean tranquillity and order. The experience of upwards of a hundred years, during which these great blessings have been uninterruptedly enjoyed throughout the whole extent of the slave-holding states, would seem, upon this point, to be conclusive. Would, or could

these important conditions of society be equally well secured under a new, a different, or an opposite system? Will those (whether in England or America) who are so bent upon overthrowing the present system point out some other under which the southern states may propose to themselves any reasonable prospect of possessing, to the extent they have hitherto done, the blessings of security and order, and that measure of material prosperity and progress which, under the existing system, they have continued uninterruptedly to enjoy? It is quite possible, indeed, that some scheme of rule might be devised which, while it gave freedom to the black, might yet insure the possession of security and order; but such a scheme would involve the condition of a crushing rigour and severity in the laws made for the government of the inferior race; who, though freed from personal bondage, would still be subjected to the power, and be at the mercy of the whites. The condition in which the former race are now found in the northern and non-slaveholding states affords us very insufficient means of judging of what their condition would be in the southern states, upon the supposition that slavery were abolished. In the former, though free, and admitted to the rights of citizenship, they are not in the least objects of fear or jealousy.

Their very insignificant numbers in those states would make such a feeling ridiculous. The laws, therefore, in those states, which affect the negro

population, are marked by no severity. The legislation of the country, although exclusively, *in effect*, in the hands of the whites, makes little or no distinction between the races, or if in some of those states any notable distinction is made in favour of the whites, it is an exception to the general rule.* Thus placed before the laws upon almost an equality with the whites, and not to these the object of distrust, suspicion, or fear, the negro of the northern states may be regarded as enjoying a position calculated to secure him as much happiness as is compatible with the peculiarities of his own nature—with the inferiority of that nature to that of the white, and with the circumstance of his being a member and an inferior member of a community not consisting either wholly or chiefly of his own race. The important point of difference between *his* position and that of the negro of the southern states (supposing the abolition of slavery in these) would be, that in the states last-mentioned he would find himself, in his condition of freedom, an object of distrust, suspicion, and fear on the part of the white.

The ruling race—those who make the laws and execute them—those upon whose *fiat* would depend almost wholly the well-being, and even the very existence, of the black, would in these states regard

* Upon farther inquiry and examination, I find that the legislation of even the non-slave-holding states is much less favourable to the negro than I had imagined.

him with more or less of distrust and fear. Will they crush him, or will they not? They have no longer any direct interest in his well-being, or even existence; and the only sympathy or kind feeling which they ever felt for him, ceased with the existence of the only tie which ever united them to him, viz. that of slavery. This now is severed, and the white and the black, *once* master and slave, and living, while this relation continued, in the interchange of reciprocal kindness and duty, now live apart, the former a *citizen*—the latter a *subject* of the same government—aliens and strangers, though living within the same state.

Is it probable that such a condition of things could last long without giving rise to the necessity of stringent and rigorous laws for the security of the ruling race against the machinations of the subjected one? Would not such laws, though enacted in no cruel spirit, and only for security, alienate still further the subject race? and would not this very alienation, and its attendant discontent and disaffection on the one side, and distrust and apprehension on the other, lead to increased severity in the rulers, and increased discontent, disaffection, and hatred in the subject race? That a state of things not very much differing from the one described, might, and probably would, arise in the southern states, upon the supposition that in those states slavery were abolished, can scarcely admit of any doubt; and that civil war, or a war of races,

would be the result, and be followed by the extermination of the inferior race, seems to be not much less certain: but, though a war of races should not be the consequence of the condition of things attendant upon the emancipation of the negro, and though the extermination of that race by the sword should not follow as its inevitable result; it seems still quite clear that, in all those parts of the slave-holding states where the white man could thrive and prosper *without the aid of slave labour*, the negro would degenerate, and at length disappear. Had the race of the North American Indians been reduced to slavery, as they might have been, they, like the negro, would have increased and multiplied, and instead of numbering by thousands, would have numbered by millions. The few of them that remain, indeed, are scattered over the far West, and in the still onward progress of civilization must ultimately become extinct. The same, or a similar fate would await the emancipated negro living in juxta-position with the white.

The difference in character and qualities between the negro and the Indian, is not such as would lead to any important difference in their ultimate fate. Wherever the advantages of soil, climate, and situation are such as *to attract a white population, and are favourable to their prosperity and multiplication*, there will the negro and the Indian, as a *free race*, cease to exist. Wherever the ranks of the superior race close up around those of the inferior,

the latter drop off and disappear. The free negroes in the northern and non-slave-holding states, though admitted to equal rights with the whites, maintain their position with difficulty. Their numbers increase slowly ; and it may be considered certain, that as those states increase in population, and the wages of labour decline, and the difficulties of procuring a subsistence become greater, the position of the inferior race will gradually become worse. So far, in some of the inferior vocations and employments, the negro has had but little competition to contend with ; but whenever the increasing population shall throw an increased amount of labour into the market, it will be found that, even in those inferior employments, the labour of the white will be preferred, and will take the place of that of the black ; and thus the means of livelihood within the reach of the latter would continue to diminish, until they ceased altogether, and with them the race itself.

In the southern states the results would be different. In these states, for reasons already given, the white population can never become very dense, at least not in those portions of the country contiguous to the sea.

In these parts, which constitute in the whole a very extensive region, agricultural labour must, as I have already remarked, be exclusively that of the negro. He alone can be employed in the cultivation of rice, cotton, sugar ; because he alone can endure

the heat and the climate. In the towns, too, much handicraft and manufacturing industry would fall to the blacks and coloured people.

The heat and insalubrity of the climate, during a considerable portion of the year, would discourage the immigration of white labour, and check or prevent its natural increase.

The white workman or labourer must be paid, not only for his work or labour, but also for his risks and those of his family. The consequence would be, that the number of white people of the working classes would be comparatively small, and be confined to the finer descriptions of work, and those which could not so well or conveniently, for southern consumption, be performed in the northern states. This, in fact, is the case to a great extent now, during the continuance of slavery, and while the wealth and opulence of the planters and proprietors of slaves still affords a good market and good prices for the best qualities of workmanship; and should this good market and the wealth of the planters cease, as they would with the abolition of slavery, the numbers of white workmen and labourers would be still farther reduced in the towns of the south—if, indeed, they continued there at all. The wealth and prosperity of the towns in the southern states are derived chiefly from the residence and expenditure of the planters, and from the commercial operations and business connected with the sale and export of their crops. The decay and

destruction of the towns would follow, therefore, as a necessary consequence, the impoverishment of the planter, resulting from the abolition of slavery.

Though still the lord of the soil, the planter would soon discover that his dominion was no longer a source of profit. His broad acres, lately cultivated, and yielding abundance, wealth, and comfort to thousands, must, now, soon be given up to waste, or at best could afford only the means of a scanty subsistence to himself and his impoverished family. *The certain effect of this condition of things would be the abandonment of the country to the blacks.* All that portion of the southern states which requires as a necessary condition of its cultivation the employment of negro labour, must pass out of the hands of its present owners into those of the blacks. The latter would become the proprietors as well as the tillers and cultivators of the soil. The large plantations, if cultivated at all, would be cut up and divided into small farms; and the ownership of these farms would be in the hands of the more industrious and more intelligent portion of the negro population. But as this portion of the negro population would, under a free system, be comparatively very small, for reasons given in an earlier part of these remarks, a large extent of the country now cultivated and improved, would be abandoned to the original swamp and forest; and the vast amounts of cotton, sugar, tobacco, and rice, which are now carried to the markets of the world, would cease to

be produced, and would give place to a limited cultivation of potatoes and Indian corn, and a few other vegetables necessary to the subsistence of the negro. Such would be the condition to which a large portion of the southern states would be reduced, should the theories of the abolitionists be carried out to their natural results; *always*, however, supposing no opposition or hindrance to be interposed on the part of those most directly interested in the fate and prosperity of the country; to wit, the owners of the soil, and masters of that part of the population without whose services and servitude the soil could have no value. That these lords of the soil and the slave should yield up both without a struggle; that they should surrender their whole inheritance into the hands of theorists and dreamers, as a subject to be cut up and dissected and experimented on, and resign themselves and consign their children to poverty and exile, for the mere satisfaction of science, or the vain and unsubstantial pleasure of a sentimental and very doubtful philanthropy, will not be very easily believed.

There is no probability, therefore, that any such condition of things as that above described will ever arise; because there is no probability that the present planters and proprietors of the soil will ever consent to allow the experiment of abolition to be tried; and without, or against their consent, there is quite as little probability of its being attempted. The remarks in which I have endeavoured to trace

the effects which would follow the abolition of slavery in the south, looking at the question merely in an economical point of view, proceed entirely upon the supposition of a perfect acquiescence on the part of the planters and people of the slave-holding states in the practical application of the *doctrines* of the Abolitionists. My object in making them was to demonstrate what *must* be the necessary consequences of allowing those misguided, though sometimes sincere, persons to have their own way. I have given them (or supposed them to be allowed) *fair play* for the trial of their cherished theories, and I have shown the results. I would ask these short-sighted, though, no doubt, sometimes well-intentioned, persons, if they have ever proposed to themselves any single distinct notion of what might be necessary to be done in the event of their favourite fancies being carried into effect. They would have 3,500,000 ignorant slaves turned loose upon communities scattered over a vast extent of country, and in many and extensive districts not numbering more than a very small fraction of the total of their liberated slaves. Are the Abolitionists prepared with any scheme or plan, or any rule of action or government, by which so immense a population may be kept within the bounds of law and order, and restrained from the commission of crime and violence, whether against one another, or against their quondam masters and proprietors? Has it never occurred to their wisdom

to reflect that, after all, men *must* be governed? and that the more ignorant and brutal they are the more they *require* to be governed? It is easy, under the pretext of philanthropy, or justice, or respect for human rights, or love of freedom, or an appeal to the maxim that "Men are born free and equal" to denounce an existing system, and to talk vaguely about the necessity of substituting some other in its place more consonant with the "*eternal principles of right*;" but it is not quite so easy a matter to say what that *other* system shall be, especially when it is considered that, in order to justify the destruction of the first, it is necessary that the second, besides being in itself in accordance with those *eternal principles of right* which these gentlemen so much insist on, must also accomplish the more immediate business of society in preserving order, in preventing crime, and in affording some substantial security against the evils of anarchy. These objects, in the eyes of the Abolitionists, very possibly are quite of a secondary and subordinate importance. The Abolitionist wraps himself up in the reflection that, while his philanthropic experiments in the south are spreading misery and confusion through the country, he and his sympathizing friends in the north are safe and well, and at leisure to follow out to its interesting results their cherished doctrine *reduced to practice*. He is a poor man, probably, or not a rich one (for the rank and file of the Abolitionists are of the middle

and less wealthy classes of society), and it is not altogether an unpleasing contemplation to him, that of the impoverishment and humiliation of a class of society on whom he has always been accustomed to look with no very friendly feeling, and perhaps with some little envy. *It is the old story of the poor against the rich.* But against his rich neighbour who lives over the way it would be unkind, or uncivil, or, above all, imprudent, to say a word; he may possibly *himself* become a rich man one of these days; he must find out, therefore, some rich man who lives farther off at the south, against whom he may vent his indignant bile in safety. It is this paltry, peddling feeling, I regret to say, which actuates a very large portion of the Abolitionists against the people and planters of the south. If these philanthropists would put themselves to the trouble of making an examination into the nature of that compound which constitutes their "abolitionism," they would find, in ninety-nine instances out of one hundred, that a very considerable part of what they mistake for a disinterested sympathy and affection for the negro is, in reality, a feeling much more allied to envy of the master than they generally suspect. It may be remarked, as a general rule, that the better classes in the northern states are free from this taint of abolitionism. Where any persons of this class take part with the Abolitionists, it is generally from the expectation of ingratiating themselves with that

party, and of making use of it as a *stalking-horse* for acquiring popularity and power. To imagine that Abolitionists generally, whether leaders or followers, are actuated mainly by a pure philanthropy, a sincere and strong sympathy with the negro, would argue a remarkable degree of simplicity of mind, and ignorance of facts. It is well known that, with few exceptions, the Abolitionists give themselves very little care about the comfort or happiness of the negro. Their business is, I am sorry to say, not happiness to the negro, but *trouble*, as much as may be, to the negro's master. Their vocation is *destruction*. They would *pull down*. They would take a pride and pleasure in contemplating the amount and extent of confusion they had succeeded in bringing about. The *thorough* Abolitionist is a radical, and that in the worst sense of the word. He is for uprooting everything which stands in the way of his own pet notion of universal equality; but, he is far more anxious to bring down those who are above him than to raise up those who are below. He is far more proud and intolerant than compassionate and humane. He would willingly see the negroes decimated, destroyed, annihilated by famine or the sword, or driven out of the country and scattered on foreign shores, to die some miserable and lingering death; but he cannot brook that they should be subjected to even the mild rule of a *southern nabob* !

If the proposition for the revival of the slave-trade, which was recently brought forward in one of the old southern states, had come from Texas, or some other of the newly-settled slave-holding states, it would not have surprised me; for it must be a great object with these latter states to have a large supply of cheap labour for the cultivation of their extensive and fertile lands; and, unhappily, the only labour they can employ is negro labour, and this cannot be obtained, except in the shape of negro slavery; for, in no other shape could it be, for years to come, sufficiently cheap to secure to the cultivator a remunerating price for the articles produced. It is this economical principle which lies at the foundation of all negro slavery—which originally introduced it, and which is destined to extend it over a large portion of the North American Continent—all that portion which, from the nature of its climate and soil, is fitted for the production of cotton, rice, sugar, and all other semitropical products which require a climate of high and genial temperature. With respect to those states or territories of the Union which do not fall within the semitropical region above indicated, such as Nebraska, Kansas, Upper California, Oregon, Washington; it is quite possible that in them, or some of them, slavery might be introduced, and hold its ground for a time, as it did, in former times, in the old northern and north-eastern states, upon the great economical principle, that wherever

there is much to be done and little labour to do it with, and where consequently **FREE** labour is dear, it will always be advantageous to introduce any system of labour which enables the employer to regulate the wages of his workman, and dictate the conditions of his work. But as, in the states last mentioned, the progress of population and consequent decline in the wages of labour put an end to slavery by demonstrating its inutility under the new and altered circumstances of the country; so, in Nebraska, Kansas, Upper California, and the far north-western regions of Oregon and Washington, although slavery might, for the economical reason assigned, be introduced and hold its footing for a time, it may be considered quite certain that its duration in those states or territories would be limited, as in the old northern and north-eastern states, to the period of its *utility*. In the southern and south-western states alone are found those circumstances connected with the nature of the climate and soil, which render *negro labour* essential to the existence of industry; and draw after them, as a consequence, the necessity of *negro slavery*, since, without slavery, the labour of the negro could not be obtained on terms consistent with the profitable cultivation of the country. It is in these states only, therefore, that slavery is destined to *continue*. The importance attached to the struggle in Kansas would appear, for these reasons, to be far greater than it really is; for though slavery, sanctioned by

the constitution of this state, should prevail for a time, and while the price and wages of free labour continued high; it seems pretty certain, from what we learn of the nature and climate of that country, that at no very distant period the possibility of that "institution" would lead to its abolition by the adoption of a change in the fundamental and organic law. I need hardly add, that the revival of the slave-trade (of which, however, there seems only the remotest probability, or I might say rather possibility) would have a most important effect in extending the duration of slavery in any state or territory in which it had once taken root.